



Control Number: 50664



Item Number: 70

Addendum StartPage: 0



March 24, 2020

Central Records Filing Clerk
Public Utility Commission of Texas
1701 N. Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701

RE: Project No. 50664, Issues Related to the State of Disaster for the Coronavirus Disease 2019;
Project No. 37277, Project for Submitting Emergency Operations Plan and Notification of
Emergency Operations Exercises

Filing Clerk:

In response to the Public Utility Commission of Texas' (Commission) request for interested parties to inform the Commission of initiatives related to the coronavirus and COVID-19, I am writing to provide a summary of initiatives that Guadalupe Valley Telephone Cooperative, Inc. and its affiliate (GVTC) has taken to date. This is a rapidly changing situation and will likely require additional actions in the future. We understand that our employees are key to our ability to meet the needs of our customers, and at the same time we must follow the official CDC guidelines regarding social distancing and telecommuting. Due to our important role during this crisis, we are taking appropriate precautions to ensure that we can supply critical services to our customers for the duration of the pandemic.

Emergency Operations Response Team (EORT)

- In accordance with the pandemic portion of the GVTC Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), the GVTC EORT meets weekly and as needed to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic, takes appropriate actions and makes recommendations to the GVTC Executive team.

Employee Safety and Preparedness

- GVTC's internal communication portal is utilized to communicate to all employees.
- GVTC has instructed employees to abide by the CDC, WHO, national, state and local guidelines.
- GVTC closed the lobbies to outside visitors and customers.
- All internal doors are propped open to reduce the spread of any virus.
- Additional cleaning of all GVTC external doors was implemented.
- A Telecommute COVID-19 policy was released that stated the need for as many employees to work from home as possible. As of 3/23/20, 85% of traditionally office based employees have transitioned to work at home.

- GVTC was able to obtain cleaning supplies and toilet paper and made this available to employees in limited quantities.

Customers

- GVTC provides information (see attached example) to the public as deemed appropriate.
- The GVTC website COVID-19 information page <http://gvtc.com/COVID-19> was created to provide timely information and updates to GVTC's customers.
- Customers have been asked to conduct business via telephone, on-line and to utilize payment drop boxes.
- Although the lobbies were closed to foot traffic, customers may return equipment at receptacles located at the office entry and by dropping off items at numerous UPS locations.
- All available technicians have been assigned to the installation and maintenance of the customer Internet and phone services.
- GVTC signed on to the Federal Communications Commission's "Keep Americans Connected" pledge and therefore pledges for the subsequent 60 days to:
 - not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - waive any late fees that any residential or small business customers incur because of their economic circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic; and
 - open its Wi-Fi hotspots to any American who needs them.(note: GVTC does not have W-Fi hotspots).
- In anticipation of increased Internet usage, fiber Internet customers with less than 100Mbps and cable modem Internet customers with less than 20Mbps were increased in speed through May 31st.

GVTC is actively involved in monitoring governmental agencies' websites including the Governor's office, the Texas Department of State Health Services, The Center for Disease Control, Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Commission, and will take additional actions as appropriate to protect our customers, our employees and our robust network.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please contact me at 830-885-8278 or tim.grosse@gvtc.net with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Tim Grosse

Manager - Regulatory



March 13, 2020

Dear Customers,

GVTC is focused on keeping you healthy and connected.

What we do is critical to ensuring you can connect to people and companies around the world for business or pleasure, and during these challenging times, it is even more critical as more of you begin to work or learn from home. We take pride in providing an outstanding network and customer experience.

The health and safety of our customers and employees are top priorities for GVTC, which is why we want to let you know what we're doing to respond to the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

What GVTC is doing to help provide a safe environment:

We're asking our employees in customer-facing roles or those that require onsite presence to take appropriate preventative measures – whether they are in our stores, call centers, our customers' homes or businesses. This includes stocking up on hand sanitizer, protective masks and gloves as well as disinfectant spray and wipes. We're also encouraging employees who may not feel well to avoid coming to work or interacting with customers.

Our frontline employees, field technicians and others take your health seriously, which is why we ask them to:

- Disinfect their workspace & hands after every customer interaction
- Pay extra attention to sanitizing common areas
- Wear protective gloves while in your home or business
- Avoid shaking hands or close personal interactions
- Take care of themselves by eating well, washing their hands frequently, and staying hydrated and well-rested
- Immediately report if they are not feeling well

Do you need to get in touch with GVTC?

We offer multiple options to interact with us electronically if you have concerns about going out in the community:

- You can visit [GVTC.com](https://www.gvtc.com) to order new service, make a payment, submit a trouble ticket, and access your account profile
- The GVTC Start app is another great method to access your account, make a payment or submit a trouble ticket that's easy to use and available through mobile app stores
- You can always call us at 1-800-367-4882 to handle anything related to your account or make a payment through our automated payment system



If you wish to deliver a physical payment, you can utilize our mail drop boxes located at each of our store locations or mail your payment with the envelope included with your bill.

If you must disconnect service and have equipment to return, we offer a convenient way to mail it to us. Please visit GVTC Equipment Return Information on our website for more information.

For the safety of our field personnel, you may be asked if you or your household are experiencing any illness that might put our technicians at risk. If you have an appointment already scheduled but begin exhibiting any concerning symptoms, please call us to reschedule your appointment at 1-800-367-4882 option #1.

For more information on how to protect yourself from COVID-19, explore the CDC website. With vigilance, patience, and proactive care we hope this troubling situation will soon pass. We sincerely thank you for your business and trust in GVTC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Donnell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "R".

GVTC President & CEO